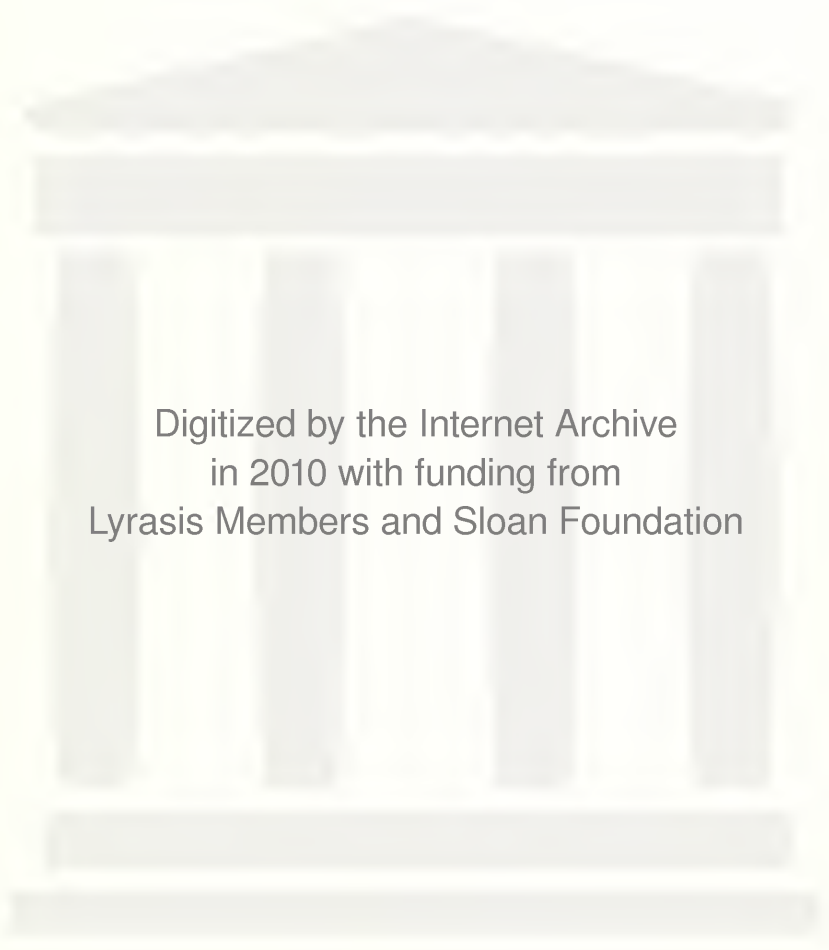


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LOUISIANA *Conservationist*

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

JULY
AUGUST
1961



July-August, 1961

Conservation Pledge

I give my
pledge as an American
to save and faithfully to
defend from waste the
natural resources of
my country — its soil
and minerals, its
forests, waters,
and wildlife

Published monthly except May, June, July and August when bi-monthly in the interest of conservation by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, Wild Life & Fisheries Building, 400 Royal Street, New Orleans, Louisiana.



Front Cover—

The quiet bayous of Louisiana, overshadowed by trees draped with beads of Spanish moss, attract thousands of fishermen each summer. From dark, slow moving water they catch fat bream and prowl bass.

(Cover Photo by Jack Britt)

LOUISIANA Conservationist

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

JIMMIE H. DAVIS
Governor



L. D. YOUNG, JR.
Director

*Subscription Free to Louisiana Residents
Upon Written Request*

STEVE HARMON, *Editor*

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EDITORIAL

SOME THREE HUNDRED of Louisiana's citizens attended the three-day public forum held to hear recommendations for Game Seasons and regulations, in Alexandria, June 6, 7 and 8.

These 300 sports-minded persons represented untold thousands of persons, and every section of the State had a few or numerous persons present to tell their story.



L. D. YOUNG, JR.
Director

The daily conferences were lively, and everyone was given ample opportunity to "speak their piece".

More time was spent in considering duck seasons and regulations recommendations than on any other subject. However, "use of dogs versus still deer hunting" and even some thought was given the question of whether "an arrow shot 140 yards"

or "bow pull weight" are more important in this new but growing sport.

The Commission received a number of recommendations for changes in regulations relating to the hunting of migratory waterfowl over which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has control. It was felt that these recommendations should be forwarded to the officials in Washington in order that they have benefit of the feelings of the people of Louisiana and provide consideration for possible changes. Primary points included in the resolution adopted by the Commission to this effect, were as follows:

- 1) Shooting hour to begin at 30 minutes before sunrise each day of the open season, including opening day for the hunting of migratory waterfowl.
- 2) That the Commission be authorized to zone the State into two separate parts for

the hunting of doves and migratory waterfowl.

- 3) That no consideration be given to further restrict the season and bag limit in the hunting of migratory waterfowl below that allowed in 1960-61.

Also great concern was expressed by many people at the meeting about the loss of waterfowl habitat, particularly on the nesting grounds upon which the duck population depends for survival. It was felt that all possible steps should be taken at the earliest moment to speed up the acquisition and restoration of breeding ground habitat in the northern part of the United States and also in Canada. Interest in continuing the development and management of hundreds of thousands of acres of water fowl wintering areas in Louisiana may be lessened if further restrictions in bag limits and hunting opportunities are imposed. In fact, we fear the strong possibility that many will cease these management practices altogether.

Appreciation was expressed for the many complimentary remarks about the Commission's Program, and its personnel. There were quite a number of "constructive criticisms" and we hope our department will be able to profit from the numerous good suggestions.

One thing is certain—there is no way that a season, bag limit or regulation can be set that will entirely please everyone in every section of Louisiana. The vast section of Louisiana, the vast and diversified waters, woods and fields, as well as climatic conditions, make completely satisfactory uniformity almost impossible in managing our wildlife resources.

It is the aim of the Commission to do always that which is considered best for the resource, in order that most of our people will be able to utilize this rich and bountiful recreation opportunity in all its phases, keeping in mind that the game species must first be considered, and nothing done that will damage their population status or welfare. +

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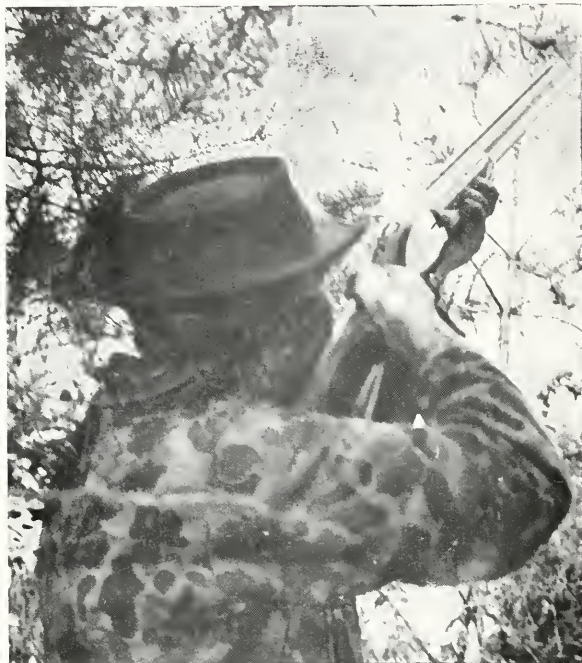
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CONNING THE CROW



Hurley Campbell



ARE YOU ONE of those hunters who never gets his fill of shooting? Does the acrid smell of burned gunpowder combined with a day in the woods give you that deep rooted feeling of satisfaction and well being that doctors advise for that jaded letdown that comes after weeks of work at any type job? Do you put up your blunderbuss at the end of the regular hunting season with a feeling that the long months until the next opening day are almost unbearable?

If you fall into any of the above categories then what I have to advise is right down your alley.

Hunting is to be had in almost any of the 50 states on any given day throughout the entire twelve months of the year. Shooting that is unmatched on a skeet or trap range or in the duck blind or afield after almost any species of game bird that you can name.

There are no limits imposed on this hunting. You can shoot as much as you want to and you can kill as many birds as you wish without any fears that the local game law enforcement officers will be hot on your trail.

And, in addition you'll be doing yourself and hunters everywhere a good turn in killing the bird that is the subject of this story.

I'm talking about, if you haven't guessed already, the hunting of that master predator, the wily black crow.

Crows are intelligent birds. They possess more than an average share of intelligence and are protective of their young. They also love excitement and a good fight.

I've often suspected that crows come to a call so readily because of their intelligence and love of excitement. They are interested in everything that happens in their bailiwick and when one or more of the loosely knit clan gets into a scrap

or finds something interesting, every crow within sound will answer the rallying call to investigate the situation.

And therein lies the secret of hunting these birds. An effective call will lure them into gunshot range. Combination calling by several hunters is even more effective than a single hunter calling. Fortunately, even though you must be reasonably adept with the call, you don't have to be a master at blowing the whistle to get the birds to moving.

But I'm afraid, the lack of knowledge of calls and calling is probably the one factor that keeps more hunters from trying their hands at crow hunting. Even though crow calling is much easier to learn than the art of fooling a duck with a wooden imitation of a quack, a knowledge of the basic calls is still essential to a good hunt.

But learning to call properly is now a thing of the past. Science has finally caught up with the crow in a big way. All you need is the ability to run a new record player—an Electronic Game Call—and you are in business.

And I do mean in business, with no holds barred except your ability to shoot!

The Electronic Game Call is a ruggedly built, highly precision-engineered electronic portable Hi-Fi bird and animal caller especially designed for the hunter, with gun or camera. It has a compact light weight separate speaker that gives the unit almost ten times the power of a regular transistor record player.

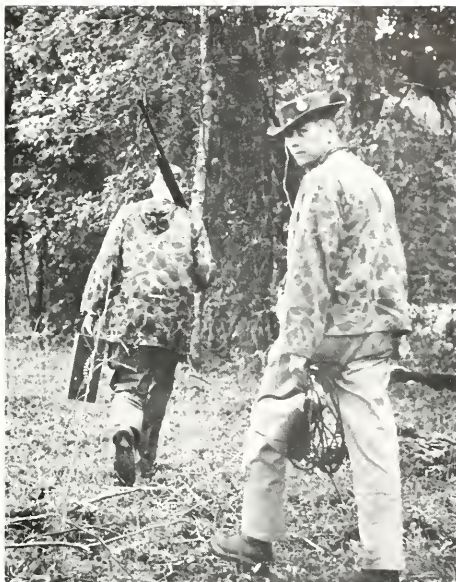
They are legal for crow hunting. And they are the most amazingly effective callers that I have ever seen. For the past ten or twelve years I have hunted crows in many spots, always with calls blown by humans. We have had excellent hunting even though the combination of a hot summer day and the prolonged blowing on a call that is necessary to lure and keep the crows within gun range is rather hard on the hunter.

But the Electronic Game Call solves these problems. Just haul it into the woods, set it up and turn it on, and get ready for the hordes of crows that flock to the magic of the recordings. Don't make the mistake that one hunter did on a hunt with me—he failed to load his gun before the record went to playing and almost busted his knuckles fumbling shells in the weapon when the crows scaled down toward the noise maker.

Crow shooting is one of the sportiest kinds of hunting. The hunter must be well concealed if he is to see the crow come within range. Hiding under low growing trees is most effective even if it does cause you to shoot more limbs than birds. Snap shots rather than deliberate aim is a rule. You have to shoot fast and hope that the lead you're throwing skyward connects with the target.

Unsportsmanlike to use such a device in hunting? Not on crows it isn't! They are among the most destructive of the predator clan and any method of ridding the country-side of this menace is not only permissible but encouraged.

We all know of the thousands of dollars of



Jim O'Brien and Bobby Blaylock, well known Baton Rouge sportsmen, properly garbed in camouflage clothing, hunt for thick cover in which to blind up their quest for crows.

damage that crows do to the crops of farmers each year. But how many know of the destruc-



The Electronic Game Call uses standard 45 rpm recordings of live game. The record player is set up under a bush that hides it from the sharp eyes of the flying crows while the speaker, on its long cord, is set up in a bush pointing toward the sky. Usually the player volume is set extremely high until the crows start to swarm in and then a reduced volume makes it harder for them to spot the actual source of the commotion.



Over 60 birds were killed in a hunt that lasted only a little over three hours on this particular morning. Stands were taken in jaunts along the wooded back roads of the Florida parishes of the state, usually at intervals of about 1½ miles apart. Bobby and Jim show off part of the kill together with the Electronic Game Call that brought in the birds.

tiveness of these birds in regard to song and game birds.

A crow can clean out a quail or song bird's clutch of eggs in less time than it takes me to type this paragraph. They kill the young birds also. They are listed by the Ducks Unlimited organization as one of the main forces of destruction of ducks' nests and broods of young on the Canadian duck factory grounds.

Almost any young bird or game animal is fair game to the crow so don't ever make the mistake of feeling sorry for him under any circumstances.

Rather, if you're just starting the sport of hunting them or have slowed down because of the exertion necessary to call them in, try out one of the Electronic Game Calls. You'll be surprised at the results.

And you'll be doing conservation a good turn at the same time you're keeping your shooting eye in the pink! ✦

Wildlife Shorts

It has been established that the only deer ranges in Louisiana producing anywhere near their maximum are the areas where some type of protection, either artificial or natural, has been offered the deer from illegal hunting, running by dogs the year round, and a chance to escape and rest—during the hunting season.

Although illegal hunting is under much better control in Louisiana than it was in former years, it still takes a toll of doe deer during the regular seasons and of all types of deer from night hunting. Probably the greatest damage is done during times of flood when deer are forced out of the swamps or upon ridges where they become readily accessible.

Barksdale Selected For Wildlife Award

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE has been selected as SAC's nomination for the first annual General Thomas D. White Fish and Wildlife Award competition.

Barksdale's entry in the competition consisted of a brochure outlining local fish and wildlife conservation progress, primarily based on activities and conservation programs of the East Reservation.

Captain Charles E. Pfeiffer is Officer in Charge of the Base Forestry Division, which covers the East Reservation, George H. Dorsett is the Chief Forester, and M/Sgt. Marion E. Austin is the game management supervisor of the East Reservation.

Because of an exceptional conservation program, two other SAC entries—Beale and Vandenberg AFEs in California—have been forwarded to Headquarters, USAF.

The award is given to stimulate interest in improving the Air Force fish and wildlife conservation program.

Judges for the SAC competition were: Major General Edwin B. Broadhurst, chairman; Major General James B. Knapp, Brigadier General Selmon W. Wells, CMSgt. Donald G. Kampmann, T/Sgt. Johnnie W. Douglas, T/Sgt. Carl E. Ester and T/Sgt. Billy G. Hanaway.

Criteria for judging included outstanding progress in grounds maintenance, game management, forestry management, fishery management, recreation facilities and community relations with federal, state and local conservation and law enforcement officials.

In the SAC competition each numbered air force and several independent bases submitted one entry. An entry consisted of a brochure outlining local fish and wildlife conservation progress.

The General White award is a silver bowl mounted on an ebony base. Each year the name of the winning installation will be engraved on the award, which will remain in the custody of the Air Force Chief of Staff. The winning installation will receive an engraved plaque in silver on mahogany depicting a replica of the bowl.

Sergeant Austin, said at the three-day public hearing on seasons in Alexandria, that "The assistance received from biologist of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission had been invaluable in managing the AFB areas, and was in a great measure responsible in helping to gain the above award." ✦

The buffalo (Bison) at one time apparently ranged over Louisiana in considerable numbers. Early writers report it in the vicinity of New Orleans and Baton Rouge around 1700.

Turtles,

Tame And

Truculent

Percy Viosca, Jr.

LOUISIANA HAS TURTLES in abundance and variety. As we navigate her bayous, or hike along her creek banks, we can watch them by the score as they fall off almost every log. It is hard to believe that our early historian Le Page du Pratz, in 1758, made the following statement: "Some turtles are seen in this country; but very rarely. In the many hundred leagues of country that I have passed over, I have hardly seen above a hundred."

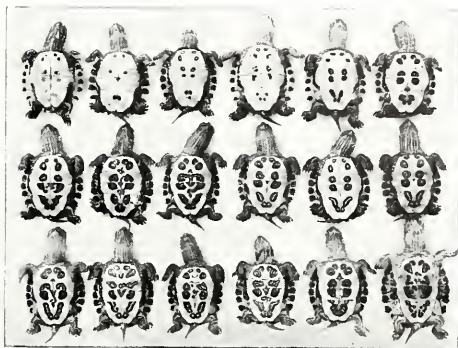
What has happened in the intervening years? Perhaps the answer, too, can be found in du Pratz History, for he remarked on the great number of alligators. Could it have been that the superabundant alligators preyed upon turtles and kept their numbers within bounds? This situation certainly no longer exists today.

Throughout the United States, exclusive of Alaska and Hawaii, there exist about 32 species of turtles. Louisiana can boast some 21 different kinds, over two-thirds of the total. This large variety of turtle species scores another first for Louisiana wetlands.

Four kinds of our native turtles are popularly called "land turtles". The largest of these is the *gopher tortoise*, found only in the parishes bordering the Pearl River. This happens to be the western extremity of the range of the species, which is found throughout the southeastern states.

The *gopher tortoise* digs long slanting burrows, preferably at the edges of ravines. It shares these tunnels with the *gopher frog*, the *gopher snake*, and a variety of other creatures. The tortoise does not molest its guests, but comes out to feed on succulent green vegetation, fruits and seeds, often gorging itself on the seedy fruits of palmettos.

The flesh of the *gopher tortoise* is delicious. It was said that during hard times in the Deep South, this tortoise was referred to as "Georgia currency." Poor folks could trade one in at any country store for about a dime's worth of groceries. This and the *Texas tortoise* (not native to Louisiana) are closely related to the giant tortoise of the Galapagos Islands in the eastern



Red ear mobilians show great variation in the markings of the underside. These babies are very popular in the pet shop trade.

Pacific Ocean.

Two species of "box turtles" are native to Louisiana. These are also called "land turtles" in distinction from "water turtles," but are not as strictly dry land animals as are the tortoises. After rains, box turtles are frequently seen crawling about in search of pools of water, in which they love to sit for a spell. The larger species is locally known as the *cane turtle*, and can be recognized by the four toes on each of its hind feet. The smaller is the *three-toed box turtle*, which has only three toes on each of its hind feet.

The *cane turtle* is restricted largely to the cane brakes and palmetto thickets of the hardwood areas, which it shares with the *cane rattler*. The *three-toed box turtle* is widely distributed throughout the woodlands of the terraced and upland districts, especially in pine flats and along ravines in the piney woods. Box turtles are frequently kept as pets, so occasional escapees can be found almost anywhere. There seems to be little doubt, however, that before the days of levees and drainage canals, the three-toed species did not normally inhabit alluvial lands, whereas the *cane turtle* did. The *cane turtle* is still fairly abundant in out of the way places in the Mississippi Basin and coastal deltas, especially on alluvial ridges transversing these areas.

A dozen or more kinds of turtles make their homes in fresh-water ponds, swamps, lakes, creeks, bayous and rivers. The largest of these is the "alligator snapper," better known locally as the *fresh-water loggerhead*, or simply "loggerhead." This bayou monster may weigh as much as 125 pounds. Too bulky to move about in search of food, it resorts to a stratagem to capture its prey. It simply attracts fish into its open mouth by wiggling a worm-like lure on the tip of its tongue, a natural "artificial bait." Then suddenly the razor-like jaws, motivated by strong cheek muscles, snap shut on the unwary fish. So the turtle gets a feast as poor fish loses lure and life. The *fresh-water loggerhead* is very meaty and much in demand for soup, especially by restaurants, where large quantities of turtle



This five pound baby *fresh water loggerhead turtle* has a long way to go to attain its ultimate weight of 100 pounds or more.

meat are required.

Our most truculent turtle is the somewhat smaller "common snapping turtle," better known throughout the Cajun country as the *caouane* (*ka'-wan*). It is widely distributed in the big swamp country, but is also found in creeks and shallow ponds. If you see one crossing the road, you can pick it up and carry it by its long tail, but be sure to keep its vicious head away from your legs. There is a belief amongst old timers that it will not release its hold until the next thunder storm, but I have yet to find someone who would dare to test this theory. The *caouane turtle* is much in demand for soup and is of the proper size for the family meal.

Some half dozen different kinds of turtles can be seen on almost any sunny morning as they dry themselves on logs, stumps, and bayou banks and drop into the water at our approach. Sunning is a healthful habit which prevents growths on the shell which would tend to retard movement through the water. Five kinds of these turtles,



The *gray sea turtle*, sometimes called the "Ridley turtle", is the most plentiful sea turtle in the Gulf of Mexico along the Louisiana coast. It nests on the Chandeleur Islands.

which make falling off a log seem so easy, are known as "slider terrapins," "pond turtles," or "cooters." All are edible, although the amount of meat in proportion to shell is small when compared to that of the popular "market varieties."

The most abundant of the sliders is perhaps the *red ear mobilian*. The males do not grow as large as the females, and usually get darker and eventually lose the characteristic red coloration which gives the species its common name. These dark males were long believed to be a different species, but now we know better.

Resembling the *red ear mobilian*, but growing to a larger size, is the *streaked-head mobilian*, in which the red of the cheeks is replaced by yellow streaks. This slider is more wary than the preceding and usually slips overboard before you can visualize its cheek pattern and thus identify it. It is a species of large bodies of water and large streams. It can tolerate some salt in the water, so sometimes we find it associated with the *diamondback terrapin* along the inner range of the latter species.

The *gray turtle* is more strictly a river and bayou turtle, but sometimes occurs in lakes, especially in the interior of the state. It does not tolerate salt water, so its numbers decrease toward the coast. Some herpetologists consider this to be more than one species, but I have yet to be convinced.

The *southern painted turtle* is the smallest of the sliders. It is a handsome species with an orange or reddish stripe down the middle of the back.

The rarest, but perhaps most meaty and tasty of our five sliders is the *chicken turtle*. This is an inhabitant of relatively small, shallow bodies of water, both east and west of the Mississippi Valley.

The turtles of the pet trade are usually the young of the five species of sliders named above, or varieties of these which occur in other parts of the country. In 1933 and 1934, a fad developed at the Chicago World's Fair for baby turtles for use as pets. Some kinds became more popular than others. In time, the handsome *red-ear mobilian* proved to be the most hardy for home terraria.

After the Chicago fair, the baby turtle business grew by leaps and bounds, and today this one species is reared in captivity in large numbers. In these turtle farms, the adult turtles are kept in large ponds surrounded by metal fencing. They are fed on water hyacinths and other aquatic vegetation, supplemented by waste from restaurants and fish docks. In fact, they will eat almost anything.

The female turtles come out of the water to lay their eggs in the soil. Each day the eggs are gathered and placed in vermin-proof outdoor incubators, supported on posts at about waist level. The incubators are filled with fine sandy soil in which squarish hollows are scooped out to hold

100 eggs each. Each such incubator nest is covered with a square board which is topped with a layer of sandy soil. A hinged wooden cover, shielded with sheet metal, covers each incubator. The cover is closed to conserve the heat at night or during rain storms, and also to prevent entry of predators, especially when attendants are not at hand. From time to time, the sand is moistened lightly with a sprinkler.

The sun's heat hatches the eggs. Loss of embryos in a well managed turtle farm is negligible when compared to that which occurs in the wild state, where predators destroy a vast majority of the eggs. Nest predators include crows, skunks, 'possums, raccoons, armadillos, hogs, ants, and no telling what else. Many of these animals dig the eggs or hatching turtles out of the nests. When the baby turtles take to the water; black bass, gars, alligators, snakes, and bullfrogs join in the fun.

The *softshell turtle* inhabits the more open water of rivers, lakes and bayous. These may be seen sunning themselves along with "cooters" of various kinds and sliding overboard as you approach. *Softshells* have a substantial amount of delicious meat which has good market value. Some herpetologists believe the *softshell turtles* to be more than one species, but, here too, I have yet to be convinced.

Completing our list of fresh water turtles are four small species, two kinds known as "musk turtles," and two kinds as "mud turtles." The *stinkpot*, our most common musk turtle, prefers swampy country, but the *keelback turtle* prefers flowing streams. The "mud turtles" include the *eastern mud turtle*, found only in ponds and small streams in the Florida parishes, and the *Louisiana mud turtle*, found in the swamps of the Mississippi Valley and west Louisiana. Both kinds of mud turtles are sometimes found together in southern St. Tammany parish. Musk and mud turtles are edible as survival rations, but are too small for commercialization in our present economic set up.

Six kinds of turtles comprise our list of salt water species. Most famous is the *diamondback terrapin* of the coastal bays and bayous, a close relative of the fresh water slider terrapins. Hundreds of thousands of "diamondback" used to be shipped annually from Grand Isle in pre-prohibition days. Fine wines were one of the ingredients of delightful soups and stews made with this species. Somehow the industry has never come back after the repeal of prohibition, perhaps in part because of the dying off of the old French chefs who knew well how to prepare this delight of gourmets. The *diamondback terrapin* is still abundant in our coastal waters, but the change over from seines to trawls after 1917 has greatly reduced the commercial supply, because they can usually outswim a trawl. As terrapin concoctions are not so popular with the beer and highball drinkers of today, the current



Red ear mobilian turtle, adult female, also known locally as the "common mobilian". Males get darker with age and lose the characteristic red color on the sides of the head.



The diamond back terrapin, female, delight of gourmets, is the abundant turtle of our brackish waters. The females grow much larger than the males.

demand does not seem to justify a specialized fishery.

Five kinds of sea turtles contribute to our market supply of turtle meat. These are all large turtles which come ashore to lay their eggs in the sand dunes of outlying islands. After incubation in the sand, the new-born turtles dig their way to the surface and hobble down the beaches and into the sea. There they remain for the rest of their lives, except for the adult females which come ashore once a year to hide their eggs in the sand.

The *gray sea turtle*, smallest of the five Atlantic and Gulf sea turtles, seems to be the most common kind along our coast. They prefer to lay their eggs on the loose sandy beaches of the Chandeleur Island chain, rather than on the more compact beaches west of the active delta of the Mississippi River.

The *green turtle*, rated as superior by epicures; the *hawksbill* from which tortoise shell is produced; the huge *sea loggerhead*; and the monstrous *leatherback*, said to reach a ton weight; are relatively rare along our coast.

Below is a list of local and scientific names

of twenty-one kinds of Louisiana turtles, with notes on where they are most likely to be found:

CAOUANE TURTLE—(*Chelydra serpentina* Linnaeus): Statewide in swamps, ponds and creeks.

FRESHWATER LOGGERHEAD — (*Macrochelys temminicki* Troost): Statewide in lakes and sluggish streams.

STINKPOT—(*Sternotherus odoratus* Latreille): Statewide in shallow ponds and swamps.

KEELBACK MUSK TURTLE—(*Sternotherus carinatus* Gray): Statewide in fresh water streams.

EASTERN MUD TURTLE — (*Kinosternon subrubrum* Lacepede): Shallow ponds, swamps and creeks of Florida Parish terraces.

LOUISIANA MUD TURTLE — (*Kinosternon hippocrepis* Gray): Pearl River Delta, westward along lowlands of Pontchartrain Basin; throughout swamps of Mississippi Valley and west Louisiana.

THREE-TOED BOX TURTLE — (*Terrapene carolina triunguis* Agassiz): Terraces and uplands east and west of Mississippi Valley.

CANE TURTLE—(*Terrapene major* Agassiz): Canebrakes and palmetto thickets on alluvial ridges of Mississippi Valley, and on delta deposits of coastal area.

DIAMONDBACK TERRAPIN—(*Malaclemys terrapin pileata* Wied): Brackish water bays and bayous along the coast.

GRAY TURTLE — (*Graptemys pseudogeographica* Gray): Statewide in lakes, rivers and bayous; very variable.

SOUTHERN PAINTED TURTLE—(*Chrysemys picta dorsalis* Agassiz): Statewide in fresh water ponds, lakes, rivers and bayous.

RED EAR MOBILIAN TURTLE—(*Pseudemys scripta elegans* Wied): Statewide in fresh water ponds, lakes, rivers and bayous.

STREAKED-HEAD MOBILIAN — (*Pseudemys floridana mobilensis* Holbrook): Statewide in fresh water lakes, rivers and bayous, tolerating slightly brackish water.

CHICKEN TURTLE—(*Deirocheilus reticularia* Latreille): Woodland ponds east and west of the Mississippi Valley.

GOPHER TORTOISE — (*Gopherus polyphemus* Daudin): Parishes bordering the Pearl River.

GREEN (SEA) TURTLE—(*Chelonia mydas mydas* Linnaeus): Rare along our coast.

HAWKSBILL TURTLE—(*Eretmochelys imbricata imbricata* Linnaeus): Rare along our coast.

GRAY SEA TURTLE—(*Lepidochelys olivacea kempii* Garman): Common along our coast, sometimes coming into brackish water.



A lagoon on North Island in the Chandeleur chain. This is the sort of place I would look for diamond back terrapins.



"As easy as falling off a log". Say "boo" and this assortment of "cooters" will gladly give a demonstration.

SEA LOGGERHEAD—(*Caretta caretta caretta* Linnaeus): Rare along our coast.

LEATHERBACK SEA TURTLE—(*Dermochelys coriacea coriacea* Linnaeus): Rare along our coast.

SOFTSHELL TURTLE—(*Trionyx ferox aspera* Agassiz): Statewide in rivers and fresh-water ponds, lakes and bayous. *

Louisiana White-Tails

Before the virgin timber of Louisiana was cut, between 1880 and 1920, deer were scattered almost over the entire state. As pine lands were cut clean and burned, the total deer range was reduced by more than half. Louisiana's deer herds are now expanding as a result of the Commission's re-stocking and better protection. Open seasons are held in three times more area in Louisiana than 10 years ago.

Indian Scientist Visits Grand Terre Laboratory



Here George examines minute specimens of shrimp at the Grand Terre Laboratory which he says is one of the finest he has seen in his six months visit studying the U. S. shrimping industry for the Indian Government.

THE LOUISIANA Wild Life and Fisheries Commission was host recently to the first man ever sent out by the government of India to research the United States' shrimp industry. He is Malloothara Joseph George, of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Station, Mandapam Camp, South India.

George, who is a marine research biologist, with two university science degrees, has been the guest of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service departments, on the Gulf Coast, and has been working with commission biologists at its new marine biological station and laboratory at Grand Terre, which he says is one of the most up-to-date and best equipped he has visited anywhere. "I wish I could have stayed longer," he said.

Purpose of George's project is part of the Government of India's second Five Year Plan, and is designed to assist in the adoption of modern methods of investigation in the shrimp fishery industry. In his position of Assistant Research Officer, George is responsible for research on problems of this valuable resource. In the United States, he is making a study of the biology of the shrimp of the Gulf of Mexico under the guidance of several experts in that field. As circumstances permit, he will also make observations on the biology of the spiny lobster. Upon his return to India, he will resume his present position.

George, who incidentally uses his name in reverse, as is the custom in India, has the title of Assistant Research Officer (Prawns) Government of India, Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

As a Trainee under Point IV Program of the Technical Cooperation, he is in the United States, on Mission of the United States Government and the program is handled by the International Cooperation Administration in Washington through the U.S. Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service. He will leave for India on July 1, after a study of six months to continue work with his government.

At present he is working on post-larval shrimp at the Grand Terre laboratory. These shrimp,

taken from the inside waters, where they reach their post-larval period, are reared to their recognizable stage in laboratory tanks so as to be identified and classified as to species.

George, who has about 10 years experience in research on shrimps in his country, in addition to his own work, is assisting the laboratory personnel in research work.

"There really isn't too much difference between the Louisiana shrimp and our own found on the Indian coast," George says. "One of our problems is to popularize the eating of seafoods among the people of India. It is a matter of religion and a vast majority of our people shun the eating of flesh of any kind.

"Most of our bigger size shrimp crop is shipped frozen to the United States and our dried shrimp are shipped to Rangoon where they meet a ready market."

"Our course," George says, "the people of our sea coast consume seafoods, but this is not the case with the people of the interior and of the higher castes who adhere strictly to their religious beliefs. They will lie down and die of starvation along side of a healthy cow because cows are sacred to them. Nevertheless, they will eat the by-products such as milk and butter."

George says that there are upwards of 80,000 small, hand or sail propelled, fishing craft in his country and about 1,500 vessels which are mechanized. Most of the products of the sea are either consumed locally or shipped out of the country, he says.

The marine biologist is Christian and 35 years old, married and the father of a small son. "I'd like to stay here longer," he said, "and work in your wonderful new laboratory, but I'm sure I'll have a lot to teach my people when I get back and, of course, I miss my family." +

Swans and whooping cranes, once common among the myriads of waterfowl in Louisiana in the early days, are now rare in the state. Most of them were eliminated by the early part of the twentieth century.



Here is a close-up of the shell planting operation. This method is far superior to the old hand operation because it is more economical and faster and spreads the shells over the water bottom in a more even pattern.

PLANT SHELLS FOR OYSTERS

Ednard Waldo

Photos by Albert J. Tullier, Jr.

PART OF THE THIRD major planting of 25,000 square yards of shells on water bottoms, aimed at catching "spat" for seed oysters, has been completed in Black Bay, in Plaquemines Parish, James N. McConnell, Chief of the Oysters, Water Bottoms and Seafoods Division of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, has announced.

According to Marine biologist Lyle St. Amant the work is complete and already a catch of about 70 percent has occurred on the first shells planted.

Money for these shell bedding operations comes from specially dedicated funds derived from royalties obtained from dead shell operations.

The shells, which are sprayed hydraulically from barges, are planted in scientifically located areas where there are firm enough bottoms to sustain their weight and where the proper environment for oyster growth has been established. The oyster seed, which is cast upon the waters, after being fertilized, develops by stages into minute oysters called "spat" which sink to the bottom seeking a hard, clean, surface whereupon to attach themselves and grow. Thus the shells, either clam or oyster, are placed by the Commission to

form beds where these "seed" oysters develop. Later the oyster growers, on word from the Commission, dredge for the seed oysters and transplant them to their own previously prepared bedding grounds where they grow to marketable size.

"In September, 1960 the areas planted with shell for seed oysters were opened and a catch of from 85 to 90 per cent of seed oysters was reported and oystermen dredging for seed oysters were amazed at the bountiful crop the plantings had produced," Dr. St. Amant said.

"Another planting of 12,000 cubic yards of shells is being made in the Bay Boudreaux area, in St. Bernard Parish," McConnell said.

The largest shell planting program ever undertaken in the South was completed in the early summer of 1959 when 135,369.18 bbls. of dead reef shells were planted in Lake Borgne approximately one mile northwest of Petit Pass Island, 250,981 bbls. of clam shells were planted in Black Bay, and 8,667 bbls. of steamed oyster shells were planted in Bay Boudreaux surrounding Little Raccoon Island.

"The first inspection of this planting was made



Here we see one of the Commission's men, who are constantly in attendance to inspect the quality of the shells that are supplied by contractors. Specifications demand that the samples that are taken at random be screened over a one-inch mesh with not more than ten (the Commission allows fifteen) per cent by volume of (whole shells, pieces or fines less than one inch in diameter, otherwise deductions are made from the contracted purchase price.



Here soundings are being made by the Commission's men to test the cubic yardage of the shells to be sprayed over the waters to form seed oyster beds.



The shells are being sifted through a one-inch screen. If only fifteen per cent go through the bargeload it is considered up to par. Otherwise deductions are made from the contract price.



Employees of Commission are seen screening the shells as per specifications at the scene of the shell plantings. The shells are sprayed over the waters where they sink to bottoms previously checked by the Commission's biologists to ascertain if they will support the weight of the shells planted.



A complete and accurate report on the shells sprayed out on the water bottoms is kept by representatives of the Commission. Contractors are paid accordingly.



These are clam shells, which are as effective on suitable bottoms as oyster shells when planted as "cultch" upon which the minute oysters may cling. Commission's scientists have reported a catch of up to one hundred per cent on such shell planting.

about the first week in August 1959. The result of this survey was most disappointing as we could not find any attached "set" at this time, although the shells were found to be clean and in excellent condition to receive 'spat.' We took water samples, and because of the heavy early summer rains and flood conditions prevailing in the Pearl River Basin realized that the salinity was too low for spat-fall. After this inspection and finding all the dead shells clean and in such splendid condition to receive "spat," we felt sure that when the September high tides arrived the salinity would rise and we could expect a good September, October and November set," St. Amant said.

"A second survey of this planting was made about November 15 and it was found that we had obtained a good set on about 80 per cent of the shells examined. The catch averaged about 5 spat per shell with an average diameter of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.

"A third inspection of this planting was made during the second week of January and it was then found that approximately 90 per cent of the shells had received a "set" averaging 8 spat to the shell with an average diameter of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.

"During May and June 1959 the Mississippi cannery returned to the water bottoms of Louisiana as "cultch" 20 per cent of shells from oysters canned by them during the 1958-59 canning season, amounting to 8,667 bbls. These shells were planted under our direct supervision without cost to the State of Louisiana in a specially selected area in Bay Boudreaux completely surrounding Little Raccoon Island.

"After two inspections, one in July 1959 and a second one during the first week in January 1960, it was found that we were receiving excellent results and that at that time the shells had received a 100 per cent catch and were considerably larger than either of the other plantings. The shells planted there were clean steamed shells obtained from the canning plants' shell piles," Dr. St. Amant concluded.

More than 250,981 bbls. of clam shells were planted in Black Bay and an excellent set was obtained. When the completion of a field survey showed such splendid results, the entire Black Bay was closed to all oyster operations until September 1, 1960.

Funds to finance this operation came from royalties on dead shell reefs, which were dedicated by the Louisiana Legislature to be expended in such a manner that would help the entire oyster industry.

During the planting of the shells the commission maintains rigid inspection of the shells supplied by contractors both as to size and as to cubic yardage. Specifications demand that samples that are taken at random be screened over a one-inch mesh with not more than ten (the commission allows fifteen) per cent by volume of whole shells, pieces or fines, less than one inch in diameter, otherwise deductions are made from the contracted purchase price. A complete and ac-

curate report on the shells sprayed out on the water bottoms is kept by representatives of the commission. Contractors are paid accordingly. *

Some Suggestions On How To Handle Your Boat

A good pilot knows how to handle his boat and he never lets the fact that he's having fun interfere with his skill, courtesy or common sense. Here are basic piloting techniques and rules of courtesy you should develop.

Watch your wake. It's a lubberly and hazardous act to set up bow and stern waves near docks, fishing boats and sailboats, especially in a light breeze. You're usually held liable for damage caused by such carelessness.

Avoid sharp turns at high speed. Not only is the risk of capsizing great, but the sudden change of direction can throw passengers out of the boat.

Always reduce the speed of power driven boats and keep a sharp lookout when passing bathing beaches, canoes, or other small boats. If there's someone in the water close by, operate at dead slow until you pass him. Spinning propellers are killers.

River cruising requires special sign reading ability. You should be familiar with day markers and range lights along river banks, as well as signals of the river itself. In straight stretches, the deepest water is usually a darker color and near midstream, while bends are usually deeper toward the outside. Eddies or turbulent waters often mark obstacles beneath the surface. Sand and mud flats tend to build up at sharp bends or where streams meet.

Avoid these discourtesies by all means: throwing garbage overboard, blowing your horn without reason, and using your spotlight unnecessarily. In many areas, local ordinances make such practices unlawful.

To pull away from a dock, make sure your stern is clear before giving a left or right rudder. This will save your boat from scrapes and nicks. When mooring, make your approach slowly and preferably into (against) the wind and current. *

Wild Turkey Come-Back

The turkey population of Louisiana was greatly reduced between 1890 and 1930. During this period the first game laws were passed to protect this great game bird. The first closed season was set in 1902, a bag limit established in 1905 and a season limit in 1922. By 1932 the population was so low that the season was completely closed from 1933-45.

The population status has reached a level satisfactory for the establishment of a short hunting season during the spring months on gobblers.



Lined with fishermen from stem to stern, charterboat fishermen and their guests are shown fishing from the "Miss Mississippi" which is tied to one of the Empire rigs during the charterboat fishermen's rodeo. Lines are down deep for red snappers and the fish are biting. The combined catch of the participating captains contained many varieties of fish but red snappers predominated in the over-all catch.

POSTMAN'S HOLIDAY

ON MONDAY, MAY 29, one of the most unusual fishing rodeos ever staged in Louisiana took place around the offshore rigs out of Empire. For weeks the tiny little community, located on the river road about 60 miles below New Orleans, has been buzzing with growing excitement about the fishing contest.

Approximately 75 fishermen participated in the First Annual Empire Charterboat Fishermen's Rodeo aboard Captain Bull Thornton's big "Miss Mississippi."

What made this rodeo unusual was that of this group fishing aboard the broad-beamed headboat,

only the charterboat owners themselves were eligible for competition. The corps of press, radio and television people, along with the wives and families of the charterboat fishermen were merely fishing for fun.

Unlike most fishing rodeos, where there is a galaxy of prizes on tap for winners, the Empire Charterboat Fishermen's Rodeo offered only a single prize. Based upon the point system, a single award was to be made, a plaque to be placed aboard the champion's boat proclaiming him the best fisherman of the contest.

The fact that the charterboat skippers, who



Capt. Walter "Chief" Naretta, skipper of the charterboat "Retta," is shown with one of the big red snappers that helped build up his point score so that he tied with Capt. Louis "Bull" Thornton, of the Miss Mississippi, as a co-winner in the first annual Empire Charterboat Fishermen's Rodeo.

have lost count of the number of parties they have taken out during coastal rodeos, were taking the proverbial postman's holiday wasn't nearly as startling as the rules under which they fished.

A total of 27 eligible fish were listed, with



Capt. Buddy Pons, skipper of the "Sammy" and one of the contestants in the first annual Empire Charterboat Fishermen's Rodeo, is shown hauling up a nice red snapper. Snappers predominated in the total catch of the charterboat captains and their guests who fished aboard the "Miss Mississippi" in the first rodeo of its kind held in Louisiana.

eight other species drawing deductible points.

Topping the list at 100 points each were swordfish and sailfish. Next, at 75 points each, were yellowfin tuna, bluefin tuna, sawfish, white marlin, tarpon and manta ray. Cobia earned 40



Participants in the First Annual Empire Charterboat Fishermen's Rodeo are shown lined up along Battistella Canal with some of their catch. Front row, from left, are S. E. Sweet, captain of the General A II; Ben Blackman, the Dispatcher; Sal Rezza, the Marjosal; and Louis Thornton, the Miss Mississippi. Rear, from left, are Jay Sternberg, the Bon Chance; Buddy Pons, the Sammy; Russell Boggs, the Red Snapper; Walter "Chief" Narretta, the Retta; Larry Zimmer, the Lawrence; and Bill Williams, the Siesta. Calvin Pelas, skipper of the Rebel II, was not present when the photograph was made.

points; and king mackerel, jackfish, barracuda and pompano each were worth 25 points. Worth 15 points were redfish, bonito, speckled trout, sharks and dolphin. Amberjacks were pegged at 10 points each, with 5 points for blue fish, Spanish mackerel, red snappers, mangrove snappers, lane snappers, eels of all types, sheepshead and drum. White trout brought only one point each.

The largest fish in each class earned an additional 25 points extra.

Making the rodeo unusual was the fact that the fishermen were willing letting themselves in for automatic deductions for the 8 species of fish that "charterboat captains are not supposed to catch."

Fishermen catching spadefish or oyster fish had 10 points deducted from their score for each one caught. Other deductible fish are sea robins, 15 points off; catfish of all kinds, trigger fish and "look downs," 5 points off; and grunts and pin fish, 3 points off.

Marion Higgins, New Orleans, served as official judge for the contest. Toward the last couple of hours, he was kept busy as the scores of the official contestants rose and fell. In some cases, where the anglers were using an extra drop line with a second baited hook, they hauled up one qualifying fish, and a second fish that erased the points earned by the first.

The "Miss Mississippi" left Battistella's Empire Marina as scheduled. It wasn't long before those aboard were rigging lines and fishing gear. The morning was bright and the open water had only a slight ruffle to it.

For hours the party moved from rig to rig. The anglers began hauling up red snappers, redfish, blue fish, cobia and even a husky shark that broke a heavy rod and created a commotion but was successfully brought to gaff.

Even though the charterboat fishermen were in serious, but friendly, competition with other charterboat fishermen, they spent much of their time helping members of the press, radio and television corps catch fish.

The ladies in charge of refreshments had seen to it that there was plenty of food aboard for the fishermen. Everyone feasted as he fished and later back at the Marina, there was a crab and crawfish boil along with a fish fry to finish off the day.

When the rodeo judge came up with the final tabulation, there was a tie between Walter "Chief" Narretta and Louis "Bull" Thornton. It was decided to put both names on the handsome plaque and display it for the first year in Battistella's cafe at the Marina.

The charterboat fishermen demonstrated they were fine sportsmen, and good fishermen, as well as good fishing guides. +



Bill Williams, captain of the "Siesta", smiles proudly with a cobia that added 40 points to his total score during the rodeo. The charterboat captains were judged on the point system and the cobia added as many points to his score as eight snappers would have earned for him.



Considerable excitement was caused during the rodeo when a shark struck a menhaden being used for snapper bait. It broke the heavy-duty rod being held by Capt. Calvin Pelas, skipper of the "Rebel II." but was brought to gaff by teamwork. One man worked the reel, another held the tip of the rod and a third man gaffed the blacktip shark. John E. Uhler, Jr., librarian for the Plaquemines Parish Library and ardent fisherman, is shown in the background.



With flags and banners whipping in the breeze, the shrimp boats at Grand Caillou pull out from the wharf in front of the Church of the Holy Family. Bishop Charles Greco, Alexandria; Father Michael W. Finnegan, Church pastor; and other Church officials of the Diocese, are shown aboard the lead boat from which the Bishop blessed all the shrimp boats in the bayou as they passed, bestowing the benediction of the Church upon the fishermen and their families.

Bishop Greco Blesses Shrimp Fleet

DOWN IN THE BAYOU COUNTRY of coastal Louisiana, there is a custom that is highly religious but laced with restrained festivity. It's the annual blessing of the Church upon the vessels, owners and families of those who go down to the sea in ships in search of shrimp. It is still as colorful as it was long ago.

In Louisiana, the shrimp fleets are blessed at a number of home ports that are coastal communities where the fishermen are born, receive their schooling, are received into the Church, and prowl the sea during season in search of shrimp.

They are not different from any other people; except perhaps in the fact that brassy sun at sea has burned their faces bronze and their hands are powerful and deceptive. They can mend a net with unbelievable skill, and haul a net aboard with powerful ease.

The Church is their main source of social and religious life when they are at home. At sea, they venture miles from shore, keeping a weather eye open, but strong in the knowledge that with them they carry the blessing of the Church. These fishermen are extremely friendly. Perhaps be-

cause they spend so many lonely nights and days searching the sea for their livelihood.

This year, at Grand Caillou, below Houma, the first of the annual fleet blessings took place. There at the Holy Family Church, hundreds of persons were gathered. Young girls in starched dresses, youngsters spick and span in their "Sunday best," and their sponsors, all massed in front of the white Church waited for confirmation ceremonies to start.

Weeks of study had gone into the preparation for the ceremonies. And all along the bayou, one could see folks putting the finishing touches on the shrimp boats. Gaily decorated, with flags whipping in a stiff spring breeze, the boats were ready for the marine parade.

The Church bell began tolling and the long procession of people, young and old, began filing into the Church. Those who would receive confirmation were flanked by their sponsors.

The Church services lasted a bit more than an hour and then the doors opened and Bishop Charles Greco, Alexandria, and Father Michael W. Finnegan, surrounded by other Church dignitaries appeared. Before them walked the altar

boys and behind them streamed the members of the Church and the young people who had been confirmed.

They made their way to the nearby bayou wharf where Bishop Greco read the Prayer for Sailors. All in attendance repeated it in unison.

"O God, Who brought our fathers through the Red Sea and carried them safely through the deep as they sang the praises of Thy Name, we humbly beseech Thee to guard Thy servants aboard ship, and, having repelled all adversities, bring them to the desired port after a calm voyage. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who livest and reignest with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, world without end. Amen."

Then the Church dignitaries boarded one of the gaily decorated shrimp boats and the long bayou parade began. There is little doubt that the hands upon the wheels of this shrimp fleet and others like it will be firmer. The sea will produce its bountiful harvest for the fishermen; but when the fishermen are miles from port and the water seems angry and destructive, the powerful hands on the wheel will have an added strength that only the faith instilled by the Church can give. ✚

Commission Requests Federal Government To Zone State For Doves and Ducks

FOLLOWING A THREE-DAY meeting with sportsmen throughout the state in attendance, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission called on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make some changes in their regulations regarding migratory birds.

E. R. McDonald, of Newellton, chairman of the state commission, urged federal officials concerned with wildlife regulations, to give serious consideration to the establishment of two separate zones in Louisiana where the commission could set different dates for the hunting of migratory waterfowl and doves. He also expressed deep concern over public and private apathy toward a sound program for acquisition and restoration of breeding grounds habitat for migratory waterfowl.

"During this three-day open forum in Alexandria, we have heard from hundreds of Louisiana sportsmen and many voiced concern about the preservation of our breeding grounds for waterfowl," McDonald said.

In its resolution the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission asked the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a unit of the Department of the Interior, to give consideration to the following recommendations:

1. That the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission be authorized to zone the state when setting seasons for doves and waterfowl.

2. That the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service es-

tablish the same shooting hours for the opening date on all waterfowl shooting days. Shooting hours to begin 30 minutes before sunrise.

3. That no consideration be given to a further reduction in bag and possession limits and to the length of season. (Last season the bag limit on ducks was four and possession limit eight; Louisiana was granted 40 days and agreed to a split season which turned back five days as a split penalty.)

4. The commission requested the fish and wildlife service to step up its program of acquisition and restoration of breeding grounds habitat for the preservation of migratory waterfowl.

McDonald added that the resolution was adopted by the commission because it expressed the feeling of the people who offered taped testimony during the three-day hearing. The meeting opened Tuesday morning and closed Thursday afternoon.

"Many of our people here in Louisiana are of the opinion that the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has the last say in establishing seasons on all game, but this is not true because the Department of Interior specifies the number of hunting days and bag limits on migratory game birds. We want our federal officials to know the wishes of the sportsmen of Louisiana and are making these wishes known in this resolution and other correspondence," he added.

In addition to McDonald, all commissions members and Director L. D. Young, Jr., attended all sessions. ✚

Tying the Fly

*Editor's note: We wish to give credit for direct quotes and information to W. L. Stone, author of *Life and Times of Sir William Johnson*; Austin S. Hogan, the *New York Conservationist*; *The Wise Fishermen's Encyclopedia*, and Herter's of Waseca, Minnesota.*

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO, Sir William Johnson, Baronet, His Majesty's Superintendent of Indian Affairs for North America, cast his flies to the trout in upstate New York.

Fly fishing in the colonies was almost nonexistent among the early settlers. Perhaps fly fishermen were rare because the early years of settlement were too rough and nasty for even the hardest of anglers to risk their scalps for a creel full of fish.

Although early historians have seemingly forgotten to speak of the sporting life in the New World, it is hard to believe that there were so few transplanted Irishmen, Scots and Englishmen who could forget the rise to the fly on the Tweed, the Dove and the Shannon when watching the trout on some lonely wilderness lake.

Johnson was an ardent angler who didn't forget his favorite sport and, at the close of the French and Indian Wars, worn from the affairs of business and state, he sought relaxation fishing the streams of that state the year 1761.

However, whereas Johnson, who grew up in Ireland, where every fashionable angler had his "book" of flies, tapered horse hair lines, single and two handed rods as befitted the gentleman, a ghillie to bait the hook, change the fly and see to it that lunch and wine were served under the proper circumstances, Sir William introduced nothing new to the North American continent; although he undoubtedly was familiar with hackles, Palmers, May flies and black gnats, for he had been preceded in the art of fly fishing by the American Indian.

Just when the Indians began their fly fishing is not known. From records it is known that the Seminoles of Florida used a deer hair bug as early as 1700, half a century before Sir William's



arrival, and it is known that Northern American Indians used floating lures of cedar in the late 1700's, to fish for bass.

Canadian Indians used caribou hair to make so-called "bugs" for centuries before the white man ever came to this continent so it is possible that the disciples of Isaac Walton, in England and the Emerald Isle had nothing on their redskin fellow anglers, as bug tiers and bug fishermen.

Artificial flies may broadly be divided into two categories. One is the "attractor kind" that does not pretend to look like the normal insect or minnow. Instead it is created solely by the tier who first designed it to suit his own idea of what the fish would strike on.

The other type of fly is the one that is made to imitate, or give the impression, to the fish that it is by size, shape and color the minnow, frog or insect upon which it is feeding.

Both types are effective. In some localities one will lead the other in effectiveness. However, as a rule, the natural or semi-natural flies unquestionably have the edge, especially when used by fishermen who understand the type of foods certain fish feed upon.

The biggest trouble with American flies has been due to a lack of knowledge about the insects upon which the fish feed. American fly patterns, up until fairly recently, have been patterned upon British flies, that were designed to imitate insects found in Britain. British flies seldom resemble the insects found in this country and are not nearly as effective in our country as flies resembling our North American insects. History does not record it, but there is room for speculation as to whether Sir William tied his own flies, or met with a slight lack of success with the imported lures he undoubtedly must have employed first.

In the early days, hair bug fishing was very popular in the South, where it was known as "spat" because of the noise the bug made when it hit the water. Long cane poles were used and the fish were hoisted into the boat or onto shore.

The fly fishermen of the north were using the bugs on long fly rods, but short casts were made.

Distance and accuracy were not attempted. At this time the hair bug was being promoted throughout the country. However, many variations were being invented because the use of the lure for sport fishing was becoming effective and popular.

Of all the hair bugs the most effective for bass was the one fashioned to imitate the frog, an animal which bass relish. This lure is known by the name bucktail frog and was developed by Joe Messinger of Morgantown, West Virginia, in 1919. Later the popping frog was developed and this was similar to the Messinger frog, only it had a head that caused the lure to "pop".

At the time the national rash of fly tying was going on among amateurs, a Tennessee stone mason named Peckinpaugh made the first cork-body bass bug in 1906. His lures later became popular throughout the country. Peckinpaugh had discovered that bass would take more readily to a bucktail fly on the surface of the water so he conceived the idea of having the bucktail float with some sort of a body under it. The cork body bugs were first made with a double hook. These hooks were tied to take bream and were called "bream bugs". The bugs were not sold by Peckinpaugh but made for his friends. However, so popular had the "bream bug" become that a few years later Peckinpaugh was forced to divert most of his time from his successful contracting business to the production of his bass bugs commercially.

Somehow, as fly tying became the rage among anglers, more and more innovations came on the market and as one fly tier puts it "we just had to go into it commercially as our friends,



John M. Parker, Jr., retired cotton broker and son of the late Governor John M. Parker, of Louisiana, shows the famous "Parker Minnow" which he invented in 1917. He says he gave the rights to produce the fish fly to a commercial concern because he could not keep up with the demands of his fishing pals. The lure is still on the market and in demand everywhere.

and friends of friends, were taking up too much of our time."

Seconding this opinion is John M. Parker, Jr., of New Orleans, son of the late governor, whose father was a crony and hunting companion of President Theodore Roosevelt. Parker, who is the inventor of a feathered minnow whose rights he gave to the Peckinpaugh company, says: "In self defense, being a cotton broker and very much occupied with my business, I just couldn't keep up with my friend's demands." The lure, commercialized by Peckinpaugh under the name of the "Parker Minnow", is still in great demand and Parker modestly explains its effectiveness.

"Like Peckinpaugh I first got the idea, in 1917 that a bass would strike more readily on the surface of the water and that it needed something to float it and also something to keep the hook in the right place so I took some hackle feathers from a caponized rooster and fixed them so that they would float just right and keep the fly on an even keel in the water. The bug was so successful that my friends almost pestered me to death to tie the bugs for them."

Parker, who is retired and lives in Pass Christian, has been a boat builder and fisherman "all his life." He recalls winning the 1926 Tarpon Tournament at Pass Christian, with his father then Governor of Louisiana rowing the boat. Al-



Here is Jimmie Kostmayer's tackle box equipped with the flies he has tied. Jimmie is a student under John Mathes, a river pilot, who is also a famous fly tier.

though still a skillful fly fisherman, he devotes some time to salt water fishing.

About the secret of the "Parker Minnow", which he called the "feathered Minnow" when he invented it, some 30 years ago, the originator says. "The body is of cork and the hackle feathers which are attached to each side stick out at angles and give it a fluttering motion. As it floats and is pulled along the surface of the water fish can't resist it. It can be cast among the grass or reeds and the fish get the idea that it is a bug that has fallen into the water and they just naturally can't help striking."

In spite of the fact that he is internationally known for his famous "Parker Minnow" this veteran fisherman, who has been fishing since 1900, says his prize catch was a 42-pound red fish. "That size red fish is hard to get," he remarked. "When I started fishing some 60 years ago we used to take our fish with a long handled harpoon and we got some mighty nice speckled trout, red fish and flounders. But there's one secret about being a successful fisherman—you have to fish everyday—today it will be good, and perhaps bad tomorrow. I fish everyday and that's why I have a reputation for being an expert."

However, fly tying isn't regulated to veteran fishermen. There's young Jimmie Kostmayer, a New Orleans school boy, whose father Jim Kostmayer, a veteran fisherman, says "He can't fish too well, but he can tie a mean fly." Jimmie has his own kits and ties flies, this by his own admission, adds to the elder Kostmayer's fly fishing prowess. Like bird watchers, you never know their hobby until you run upon them, for instance there's John Mathes, a river pilot, whose fly tying is declared par excellence; and Dave Hymel and Ed Fayard, who was forced into the business by friends; and then there's "Doc", the Broadway pharmacist who has been creating and tying flies for years; and Hermann Deutsch the columnist, who is well known for his former fly tying artistry. In Baton Rouge, Shreveport, Monroe, Lake Charles, Minden, you'll find the fly tiers.

The bodies on flies are made up of a great many different kinds of materials. They include, fur, fiber quills, quill stripped from center quill of feather, the whole feather center quill, quill butt of feather, silk floss, chenille, tying silk, tinsel, gut, hackle, moose hair, caribou mane, cork, rubber, boar's bristle, plastic, tail feathers of pheasants, ostrich herl, emu herl, peacock sword and eye herl, cellophane, photograph negatives, kapok, raffia, wheat straw, birch bark, oriellard plume, African ant eater hair, porcupine quills, fibers from condor, swan and turkey flight quills, ox hair, badger hair, Nylon, wool yard, spun fur, mercerized floss, spun glass, felt, sponge rubber, plastic sheets, and if there is anything else, you mention it!

Fly tiers all have their pet secrets and, believe it or not, each ties the best and most effective bug. Of them it has been said, "Lord suffer me to bear with grace, the lies I've listened to, of



Like John M. Parker, Jr., Jimmie Kostmayer, Jr., who is a student at New Orleans Academy, and son of a well known angler, has taken to tying flies in his youth and is so adept that his father admits that Jimmie's bugs add to his own fishing prowess.

fish their size, and favorite flies, and all such bally-hoo." But fly tying has gone on for a long time. If we look into the past, history tells us that the Persians were tying flies and using them as early as 200 A.D.

And incidentally, apparently believing that fishermen need all the help they can get, a group of Franciscan nuns in Ohio are making and selling fishing lures complete with built-in prayer for the user's success. The nuns make 16 different lures ranging from plastic worms to plugs, and these are sold appropriately under the name of the great fisherman, St. Peter.

It's not known yet what success the fishermen have had with the "blessed" lures, but the thought of them in the tackle box might inhibit the fishermen's propensity for stretching the truth about the "big one that got away." Anyway this will prove that fly tiers are like bird watchers. They're where you find them! *

Editor's note: We wish to give credit for direct quotes and information to W. L. Stone, author of Life and Times of Sir William Johnson; Austin S. Hogan, the New York Conservationist; The Wise Fishermen's Encyclopedia, and Herter's of Waseca, Minnesota.

Starlings Population Growth Explodes into Pest Problem

The starling is smaller than a robin and blackish in color. It is a common resident of Louisiana and its nesting here has been on the increase. This is one of the birds that has been introduced into this country from Europe. Having come to a new habitat leaving their natural enemies behind and since there has been no natural check on the birds they have multiplied until they have become so numerous as to have become pests.

With

Our

Commissioners

(Editor's note): In this issue, John Paul Crain, member of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission from Grand Chenier in Cameron Parish, writes this article on Southwest Louisiana. He knows this area, the people who work and the people who find recreation there. We hope you will enjoy this second in a series of articles by our commissioners.



John Paul Crain

THE COASTAL MARSHES and rice fields of southwest Louisiana, combined with other characteristic terrain features, make up one of the most diversified areas in the country. Laced by bayous that wander to coastal lakes and bays; ridged with gnarled cheniers that have withstood the havoc of hurricanes and the savagery of storms; and spotted with occasional patches of pine land that accent the regular, but seemingly irregular, rice fields; southwest Louisiana means many things to many people.

Although the area is rich in hidden wealth in the form of furbearing animals, oil and gas, minerals and fisheries; most people associate it with migratory waterfowl. It is a mecca for migrants, attracting millions of ducks, geese and coots each winter. It also serves as the wintering ground for several hundred species of birds, ranging from long-legged shorebirds to swift mourning doves.

From the air, the entire area seems picturesque but little utilized, except for the scattered communities, highway traffic, and "V" shaped wakes of boats moving in the bayous and along the coast. But, to the people who know the area, it is one of nature's richest reservoirs, teeming with birds, animals, reptiles and fish; augmented each fall and winter by a mass migration of birds and waterfowl that literally staggers the imagination.

There are many reasons for this plumed pilgrimage to southwest Louisiana that takes place each fall, generally lasting throughout the winter.

While untrained eyes might see only a vast marsh, punctuated with lakes, bayous, and cultivated fields; trained eyes see a million and a half acres of prime marshland that can remain the most important region for wintering waterfowl and non-game birds in the vast Mississippi Flyway for generations to come.

It will remain so, only if man fully realizes that it must be treated sensibly and not abused. We must keep in mind at all times that all projects that lead to changing of water levels in our marshes should be given much consideration

and study by experts. Slight changes of water levels can some time be disastrous to huge areas of marshland and be very costly to correct. Many of the residents, whose forefathers have lived on the land, cared for it, and reaped a rich annual harvest from furbearers, alligators, cattle grazing, waterfowl hunting, and sport and commercial fishing know this.

Before getting around to the many harvestable natural resources that lead to the positive conclusion that this area of southwest Louisiana must be closely guarded, enhanced and improved, it would be well to consider the importance of the area to sportsmen who hunt migratory waterfowl and the many trappers who trap furbearing animals in the marshes.

During the winter of 1960, the State of Louisiana attracted an estimated 58 per cent of the waterfowl population in the Mississippi Flyway. Southwest Louisiana, in turn, was utilized by approximately 60 per cent of the ducks, geese, and coots in Louisiana for the winter.

This was better than half of the total estimated numbers of four and one half million ducks, 550,000 geese and nearly a half-million coots in the state. In a capsule, this meant that more than two and one half million ducks, geese and coots chose southwest Louisiana to spend the winter. This, of course, was in addition to millions of non-game birds that annually provide bird watchers and ornithologists with the greatest array of birds ever concentrated in one area.

With this tremendous influx of migratory wildlife each year, it is only natural that there should be refuges. These areas offer protection to migratory waterfowl. At present, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission provides 180,000 acres for refuge purposes. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides 174,000 acres; and 26,000 acres are provided by the National Audubon Society. Additionally, private landowners and hunting clubs manage hundreds of thousands of acres of marsh for the purpose of improving habitat for waterfowl, furbearers, alligators and

other winter-weary wanderers.

The very nature of the terrain in southwest Louisiana makes some parts of it highly attractive to doves. Sportsmen have fine dove shooting in the rice fields during the open season. In the pine lands, quail shooting is better than many people might imagine. Wildlife workers feel that the growing deer herd may one day make a section of southwest Louisiana one of the most important deer management areas in Louisiana. To speed up this phase of making the area a permanent paradise, running the gamut from waterfowl and doves to deer; the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has been engaged in a deer-stocking program for years, and created game management areas such as West Bay near Oakdale.

With unexcelled waterfowl concentrations in season, southwest Louisiana offers the finest duck and goose shooting of any area in the state to the many sportsmen who hunt the area. The list of assets doesn't end there. Both sportsmen and commercial fishermen can find vast numbers of fish. Sportsmen, in particular, can enjoy both fresh water and salt water fishing that is virtually untapped. Many pleasure boats are available in the town of Cameron for a reasonable fee for some of the best salt water fishing on the coast.

This does not apply to the already well established menhaden industry which is an important cog in the economic wheel of fisheries industry in southwest Louisiana. However, the full potential of commercial fishing has not been reached.

The Louisiana Wild Life & Fisheries Commission planted approximately 10,000 barrels of oysters in Calcasieu Lake last year to add to the existing oyster industry in the area. With continued planting and cleaning up of pollution, it is believed that these water bottoms can be greatly expanded in oyster production.

It is gratifying to be able to say that in southwest Louisiana we have an area that is unusual and unmatched in the diversification of its wildlife resources.

However, there is no room for complacency. There is a definite need for continued efforts to preserve what we already possess, and to improve upon nature. By study and investigation, we can discover the natural factors that make southwest Louisiana so attractive to all forms of wildlife. Armed with that knowledge we can then expand and make permanent those natural attractions.

Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge is a good example of what can be done. For untold centuries, those marsh acres in the refuge have attracted waterfowl and migratory birds. Yet, in less than a decade, man has been able to increase the carrying capacity ten-fold through use of levees and water control structures. Other projects are planned for the Rockefeller refuge which will make it even more appealing to all forms of wildlife. The work being done there, and at a private level, should go forward without hesitation.

Many improvements have been made on the

Lacassine and Sabine Refuges in water control. Huge areas have been diked off with water control structures to hold water on the marshes to create some of the world's finest fresh water fishing and is utilized by many sportsmen. The control of the water in these refuges also improves them for birds of all kinds by affording water even during severe droughts.

In conclusion, let us bear in mind we only have a narrow strip of marshland along the Gulf Coast as compared to millions of acres of high land in our great country; so please let's take care of it. ✦

Duck Breeding Grounds Get DU Appropriation

The Board of Trustees of Ducks Unlimited, the nation's leading migratory waterfowl conservation organization, appropriated \$550,000 at their 24th Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, to continue the work of restoring and building duck breeding grounds in the Canadian Prairie Provinces in 1961. This appropriation marks the sixth successive year the internationally famous wildfowl group has allocated a half-million dollars or more for the development of "duck factories"—all of these funds being contributed by United States sportsmen to preserve and encourage the sport of wildfowling.

With this appropriation of \$550,000, the total amount sent to Canada soared to more than \$7,500,000 which duck hunter-sportsmen have contributed to Ducks Unlimited for the work of building or restoring more than 600 "duck factories" on the breeding grounds in Canada, where more than 65% of this continent's migratory waterfowl raise their young. Federal law prohibits the use of duck stamp funds for this purpose outside the territorial borders of the United States and therefore the development of the continent's primary duck breeding areas in the prairie provinces of Canada must be supported by sportsmen through the contribution of private funds. ✦

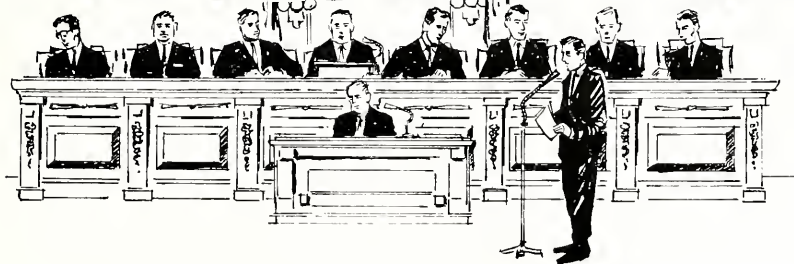
Wildlife Shorts

Dove, woodcock and snipe suffer considerably in times of snow and sleet, although such conditions occur rarely in Louisiana as the climate is considered ideal for game. Doves suffer from starvation and freezing, woodcock, and snipe from starvation, freezing, and occasional illegal kills by man.

Quail and dove were reported to be uniformly rare in Louisiana in early times. Since they are seed and grain eaters this is understandable. Peak populations of these two species occurred much later where farming was crude but extensive and when thousands of acres were cleared of timber increasing the range of these species.

REPORT

on commission action



MAY 23, 1961 MEETING

THE COMMISSION voted affirmatively to give the New Orleans City Council the authority to set aside specific areas in Lake Pontchartrain for particular boating activities. It further granted the council authority to pass a proposed ordinance that prohibits swimming activities in certain areas of the lake where water skiing is practiced and armed scuba diving is allowed.

In other actions the commission voted to:

Award certificates of recognition to persons who worked for and participated in the Louisiana Wildlife Federation's Federation and Industry Recreation program. (Under this program private property is dedicated for public recreational use.)

Restore the state's depleted alligator population, basis of a state industry, by restocking coastal areas with alligators from the Rockefeller Refuge.

Furnish lists of boat registrations at a cost of \$3 a 100.

Approve the Louisiana-Mississippi Revised Reciprocal Agreement governing hunting and fishing along the Mississippi river bordering Louisiana and Mississippi.

Permit in 1962 commercial fishing for buffalo in Clear Lake.

Endorse the Gruening Bill, a Congressional proposal to provide additional federal funds for fisheries research.

Continue its contract for the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease study which has its headquarters at the University of Georgia in Athens.

Request the federal bureau of sport fisheries and wildlife to grant the commission authority to establish the 1961 dove season within the following framework: Sept. 1 through Jan. 15, 1962; shooting house hours, noon to sunset; a zoned state with authority to split each zone without penalty or a 3-way split for three periods of time; and bag limit of 12, possession limit, 24.

APRIL 25, 1961 MEETING

The Commission adopted rules governing out-of-state boats taking shrimp from Louisiana waters for transport out of the state. The rules were presented to the Commission by James N. McConnell, Chief of the Oysters, Water Bottoms and Seafood Division, and require that all such boats obtain a permit from the Commission's office in Biloxi, Mississippi.

The rules adopted by the Commission provide that no out-of-state boat will be allowed to fish shrimp from Louisiana waters without first securing a permit from the Commission; that the permit will be valid for one trip only; that an inspector will be stationed at Grand Pass to inspect all boats leaving Louisiana waters; that any boat failing to comply with those regulations will have her trawl license taken up and the captain will not be allowed to operate any other boat in our waters without written permission of the Commission; that, in addition, the new regulations must be placed in the cabins of all boats operating in state waters fishing for shrimp.

McConnell said that the regulations were necessary to insure the proper collection of the shrimp tax.

The Commission also voted to endorse proposed federal legislation that would provide \$20 million

annually for the acquisition of wet lands for the preservation of migratory waterfowl.

Also endorsed, by the Commission, was proposed federal legislation that would require any federal agency to consult the federal fish and wildlife service before beginning any federal program for the use of pesticides or other chemicals designed for mass biological control.

In addition, the Commission:

Ratified Director Young's action requesting \$25,000 to create an artificial reef near Grand Isle and the same amount for creating a similar reef south of Cameron Parish.

Voted to purchase a 10-acre tract of land on the western tip of the Marsh Island from the U.S. Government.

Awarded an order for one super-cub seaplane to Louisiana Aircraft in Baton Rouge to be used in the enforcement of the Commercial Seafood laws.

Approved the sale of \$10,000 worth of timber on the Bodcau Game Management area, northeast of Shreveport, to the highest bidder.

Announced that the Commission would inspect Prien Lake, near Lake Charles, to investigate complaints from area residents concerning shell dredging operations on the lake. +

FEDERAL AID TO LOUISIANA CUT

LOUISIANA will receive approximately \$241,000 in federal aid, Pittman-Robertson funds, to carry out game projects during the fiscal year extending from July 1, 1961, to July 1, 1962, which will be a reduction of about \$45,000 from the 1960-61 fiscal year, John Newsom, Chief of Fish and Game Division, announced.

"Reason for this cutback is due to expenditure in past years of a surplus fund built up during World War II," Newsom said. "This apportionment to the states has gradually depleted the surplus as was anticipated, and is the principal reason for the sharp cutback in federal funds allocated to the states."

The recent announcement by Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall that the funds made available to the State of Louisiana, and other states, derived from an excise tax on sporting guns and ammunition and on sporting rods, reels, artificial lures and other fishing gear, would be made available July 1 actually is a partial apportionment of funds that would normally be made available to the states in October for use during the fiscal year 1962-63. However, these funds must be held in reserve for use during fiscal year 1962-63 in order to continue the Pittman-Robertson program.

"It has been the custom of the interior department to provide individual states with these funds in October," he said, "but the advance ap-

portionment was deemed necessary because many states have exhausted their federal aid money, and some states are without any federal aid money on hand." +

County Agents Asked To Help in Crawfish Studies

COUNTY AGENTS in the crawfish producing areas have been asked to cooperate in making a census of crawfish farms which is being conducted by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, according to James N. McConnell, chief of the Oysters, Water Bottoms and Seafood division.

After the data is gathered, information on crawfish culture, including a map, will be assembled by the seafoods division of the commission for publication in bulletin form at the earliest possible date, according to Percy Viosca, Jr., marine biologist, who is in charge of the census. The census is being made through questionnaires that have been sent to the county agents Viosca said.

The questionnaire will also be sent out to soil conservation personnel and other individuals interested in crawfish culture. More than two hundred individuals have appealed to the commission for information on crawfish culture during the past several months, Viosca said. They also will be sent questionnaires. +

Wildlife Shorts

The sparrow hawk is the most friendly of our hawks. It can be distinguished from all the others by its small size, rufous tail and spots on the breast. A few of these birds nest in Louisiana but they are more numerous in the winter when those nesting in the north come south again.

The screech owl, a permanent resident of Louisiana, is one of our most interesting birds, and most useful. Its food consists of mice, rats, fish, frogs, lizards and sometimes birds. It hardly ever disturbs chickens. These birds make good pets provided they are kept away from other birds, even from other screech owls.

Very few early records exist concerning the wild turkey in Louisiana. The few available records indicate that turkeys ranged in 41 of the state's 64 parishes in abundance but in general were absent from the prairie land parishes of southwest Louisiana, the Mississippi delta, and the coastal marshes of the state.

A recent study of the muskrat indicates that extreme droughts are quite detrimental to its annual production.

The Bird of the month

Charles Shaw

THIS INTERESTING bird seems to be a late-comer to Louisiana and like the Scissor-tailed Flycatcher and the Armadillo must have moved east from Texas.

It is not listed in Bulletin No. 28, "The Bird Life Of Louisiana", written by Oberholser and published by the Department of Conservation 1938, but was noticed shortly thereafter and has increased to the point where it is not uncommon in the northwestern quarter of the state in the general area west of the Red River, and may be seen occasionally in the Southwestern portion of the state west of the Calcasieu River.

This rather ungainly member of the cuckoo family is well adapted to its life on the ground with a pair of very well developed legs and it presumably got its name from the habit of earlier days when it would run ahead of stage-coaches and buckboards on the western frontier.

The habit still holds to a certain degree but the speed of today's vehicles make it a short race with the roadrunner turning quickly aside to keep from being run over.

In size the bird is nearly as large as a hen pheasant and appears to have brownish upper parts streaked with white and whitish under parts streaked with brown but the most obvious features are a large head with a very noticeable crest and a long rounded tail with the outer feathers white tipped.

A number of the bulky nests, roughly constructed of twigs, sticks, etc., and containing 3

THE ROADRUNNER

Geococcyx californianus



to 5 chalky white eggs, have been found in Louisiana so this is definitely considered a breeding bird. The nests are generally located not far from the ground in bushes or low trees as might be expected from a bird that spends most of his life on the ground.

One of the most interesting features about the roadrunner is his diet. According to legend he lives entirely on rattlesnakes. This would indeed make him a most welcome member of most communities if rattlesnakes were that plentiful. There is actually some basis for the legend because the bird will eat small snakes, including rattlesnakes, and in addition, lizards and such other small animal life as it can grasp with a rather large beak.

There is no reason to believe that it is particularly harmful to quail as has sometimes been rumored, and taking everything into consideration, the food habits of this bird should class it as an ally of the farmer and forester. +



A Favorite Of Many Who Fish...

The Chinquapin

Ounce for ounce these scrappy little fellows will put up the best fight of all the pan fish and once mealed and floured and fried in deep fat offer a gourmet's delight on the outdoor table.

